Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-90-067
Friday
6 April 1990

Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-90-067 *6 April 1990*

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Rio Group Ministers Support Mexico on Panama *[Madrid EFE]* 1
Comparison to Montelimar Declaration Released *[BARRICADA 4 Apr]* 1

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

Havana Denies TV Marti Seen in Some Areas *[Havana TV]* 2
Castro Speaks to Union of Young Communists *[Havana TV]* 2
Castro Invited to First Pioneers' Congress *[Havana TV]* 2

Haiti

Venezuelan Leader Expresses Support to Trouillot *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 2
Presidential Decrees Change Public Administration *[L'UNION 4 Apr]* 3
Narcisse Partisan Accused in PDCH Car Bombing *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 3
Soldier Flees Hijacked Aircraft, Disappears *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 3
Hinche Barracks Revolt Reported Solved *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 4
New Teleco Director in Attempt To End Crisis *[L'UNION 4 Apr]* 4

CENTRAL AMERICA

El Salvador

Diplomatic Ties With Nicaragua Said To Resume *[San Salvador Radio]* 5
Interview With FMLN Commander Sancho, Part I *[Radio Venceremos]* 5
Opposition Pleased With Negotiation Accord *[ACAN]* 7
FMLN's Diaz on Resumption of Peace Talks *[Madrid EFE]* 8
State of Siege To End; No Extension Requested *[San Salvador TV]* 8
Army Troops, Rebels Clash on Capital's Outskirts *[AFP]* 8
FMLN Claims 2[illegible] Army Casualties in Cabanas *[Radio Venceremos]* 8

Honduras

Nicaraguan Deserter's Helicopter Being Returned *[Tegucigalpa Radio]* 9

Nicaragua

RN Says Military Activities Continue *[Madrid EFE]* 9
Ortega Demands Contras Halt Military Offensive *[ACAN]* 9
PDC's Fletes on Humberto Ortega's Appointment *[Managua Radio]* 10
Lacayo on Retention, Other Topics *[ACAN]* 10
Correction to D'Escoto on Contras, Future Plans 11

Panama

Endara on First 100 Days, Mexican Relations *[Panama City TV]* 11
Linares on Mexican Reaction to Endara Statements *[Panama City TV]* 12
More on Linares Comments *[LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA 5 Apr]* 12

Police Personnel Chief Aleman Removed From Post *[LA PRENSA 3 Apr]* 15

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina

Envoy to U.S. Comments on Negotiations With IMF *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 16
Economy Minister Meets U.S. Treasury's Brady *[TELAM]* 16
Economy Minister Comments on Yacyreta Project *[TELAM]* 16
Menem: 'Not Talking About Canceling' *[Buenos Aires Radio]* 17
Menem's Measures To Rationalize Public Companies *[TELAM]* 17
Senator Menem Leaves for UK; Comments on Dam *[Buenos Aires Radio]* 18
Foreign Minister Cavallo To Begin European Tour *[TELAM]* 18
Government Declares State of Social Emergency *[Madrid EFE]* 19
Editorial Deems TV Marti 'Invasion' of Cuba *[LA PRENSA 5 Apr]* 19
Number of Supreme Court Members Raised to Nine *[Buenos Aires Radio]* 19

Bolivia

General Rejects U.S. Military Antidrug Aid *[PRESENCIA 31 Mar]* 19

Brazil

Cardoso de Mello Denies Rumors of Bank Holiday *[Brasilia Radio]* 20
Congress Approves Provisional Measure 159 *[Brasilia Radio]* 20
Government Signs Trade Agreement With CSSR *[Brasilia Radio]* 20

Chile

President Bush, PRC President To Pay Visits *[Madrid EFE]* 20
New OAS Ambassador on Ties With Bolivia, Cuba *[Santiago Radio]* 21
Government To Sign Accord on Ties With Bulgaria *[Santiago Radio]* 21
Minister on Creation of Antiterrorist Police *[Santiago Radio]* 21
Defense Minister Denies Nuclear Capability *[Santiago Radio]* 21

Colombia

Extraditables Free Senator Estrada in Medellin *[Madrid EFE]* 22
Police Discover 200 Kg of Dynamite in Medellin *[AFP]* 22

Paraguay

Argentine Foreign Ministry Official on Yacyreta *[ULTIMA HORA 5 Apr]* 22
Moreno Gonzalez Elected Speaker of Chamber *[ULTIMA HORA 29 Mar]* 23

Peru

Preparations, Events Relating to 8 Apr Elections 23
Voter Registration Closes *[Lima TV]* 23
Final Preparations Reported *[Lima TV]* 23
Candidate Barrantes on Program *[EL COMERCIO 18 Mar]* 23
Deputy Candidate's House Bombed *[Lima TV]* 24

Uruguay

Gros Espiell: Group of 8 May Accept New Members *[Madrid EFE]* 25

Venezuela

700 Troops Prepared To Travel to Nicaragua *[Caracas TV]* 25

Rio Group Ministers Support Mexico on Panama

PA0504205890 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1723 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Mexico City, 5 Apr (EFE)—The foreign ministers of the Group of Rio have expressed their support of Mexican Foreign Secretary Fernando Solana following Panamanian President Guillermo Endara's verbal attacks against him and the Mexican Government on 31 March, the organization's press office announced today.

In a diplomatic note, the foreign ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela emphasized that the statements by Solana last Friday [30 March] at the end of the seventh meeting of foreign ministers of the Rio Group are the legitimate expression of the opinion of that organization and reflect the attitude maintained by the group regarding Panama.

The communique added that the statements made by Solana are consistent with the position of the Rio Group ever since the beginning of the Panamanian crisis, when General Manuel Antonio Noriega dismissed President Eric Arturo Delvalle, causing the country to be suspended from this consultation and coordination group. The Mexican foreign secretary said last Friday that Panama does not belong to the Group of Rio and read the final communique issued at the meeting, in which, among other things, the seven foreign ministers recommended that a referendum be held without interference to normalize the isthmian country's political situation.

After learning of the final document, President Endara attacked the Mexican Government, disqualifying it as being the product of an electoral fraud, at the same describing the Group of Eight's conclusions as rubbish.

The Mexican Government issued a diplomatic note on Monday [2 April] expressing its strong protest over Mr. Endara's statement.

Meanwhile, the Mexican Congress rejected the regrettable and mistaken statements made by Mr. Guillermo Endara about the Mexican Government. The condemnation was supported by six of the seven factions of the Mexican parliamentary group. The Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) went even further and requested a break in diplomatic relations with Panama.

Comparison to Montelimar Declaration Released

PA0504124290

Managua BARRICADA in Spanish on 4 April on page 3 publishes the text of the Montelimar Declaration. The BARRICADA version has been compared with the Radio Sandino version published in the 4 April Latin America DAILY REPORT, pages 3 to 5, revealing the following variations:

Page 3, column one, paragraph four, from only sentence, reads:... the Esquipulas peacemaking process, which is a single and indivisible whole; [new paragraph]

And encouraged by.... (supplying additional material)

Page 3, column two, paragraph eight, from only sentence, reads... and end by 25 April, at the latest. (supplying different date)

Page 5, column one, paragraph four, from only sentence, reads... Central American refugees (IREFCA) that will be... (supplying acronym for organization)

Page 5, column one, paragraph six, from only sentence, make read... during the second quarter of the current year at a meeting scheduled to be held in Guatemala. [new paragraph]

16. They have decided to meet again during the second two months [as published] of the current year in a meeting scheduled to be held in the Republic of Nicaragua. (supplying variant wording, numerical sequence, and additional material)

Cuba

Havana Denies TV Marti Seen in Some Areas

FL0604011990 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 Apr 90

[Text] While dozens of correspondents from throughout the world have witnessed in Cuba morning after morning that the worm television signal cannot be picked up by receivers on the island, the U.S. public, traditionally the most informed people in the world, is once again deceived by its powerful broadcasting media.

Two known reactionaries, Congressmen Dante Fascell and Larry Smith, shamelessly said that the television signal is only being blocked in some parts of the island but that it can be seen perfectly in other areas. [video shows Fascell and Smith at news conference]

We think it is not necessary to dwell on this matter. Nevertheless, the gall of these two parliamentarians raises several questions. Where did they get such precise statistics to defend their arguments? Did they perhaps get them from the Yankee interests section in Havana or are they attempting to pass off their dreams as reality? How far can they go with an entire administration that lacks seriousness and which claims success when it has only sown resounding failure? How long do they plan to maintain an unsustainable lie? The report indicates that Smith and Fascell will continue to support the television aggression project against Cuba. This is natural; it is no secret that the two of them got into Congress with the Cuban immigrants' vote and that they profit from the large quantities of dollars controlled by the worms and supplied by the CIA.

The U.S. public is the one that is hurt the most since it is the victim of this new campaign of lies. Of course, we should not forget that the dollars used for fantastic projects, such as the worm television station, come from the U.S. taxpayers' pockets.

Castro Speaks to Union of Young Communists

FL0504134090 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1153 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Excerpts] Yesterday was a happy day for the Pioneers and young people. A large group of young people gathered in a beautiful place—Expo Cuba. Along with Commander Fidel Castro, workers and leaders of the Union of Young Communists celebrated the 28th anniversary of that organization at Expo Cuba. Let us watch a report about this.

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] [Castro] Well, I will say a word, but very, very briefly, really. But first a question: Where are you going to sit? [crowd answer indistinct] Second: Where is the little box [words indistinct] somewhere? Good. I believe I can sum up in one sentence what I think, what I can think of to say to you, comrades, on this 4 April. And that is, in my opinion, 1990 has become the 1 January of the new generation. [applause] That is all. Socialism or death, fatherland or death, we will win. Now to eat. [applause; crowd chants: Fidel, Fidel!]

This year, 1990, is the 1959 of the new generation. They are combative, enthusiastic, excited, vigorous, strong, courageous, prepared. That is the impression I have. It feels to me as if it were 1959 that we are experiencing. Does it not seem that way to you? But you were not alive in 1959? [response indistinct] That was a long time ago.

[Reporter] Are you happy, then, with these young people?

[Castro] Yes, I am very happy. [end recording]

Castro Invited to First Pioneers' Congress

FL0504125190 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro received last night, 4 April, coinciding with the anniversary of the Union of Young Communists and the Jose Marti Pioneers' Organization, a message inviting him to the first Pioneers' congress, sent from Turquino Peak by carrier pigeon. Yesterday morning, after the call for the congress had been issued in the Sierra Maestra, the message left for the capital.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified pioneer] Comrade Commander, now I am going to hand over the message sent by the Pioneers from Turquino Peak, where the call for the first Pioneers' congress was issued.

[Castro] Thank you.

[Unidentified pioneer] You are welcome.

[Castro, reading message] Dear Fidel: The Cuban Pioneers invite you to participate with us in our first congress which will be held in 1991, because with you and socialism we are happy here. A very large kiss, the Pioneers. [end recording]

Haiti

Venezuelan Leader Expresses Support to Trouillot

FL0504164990 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1100 GMT 4 Apr 90

[Text] The new Venezuelan ambassador in Port-au-Prince, Hugo Alvarez Pifano, gave the Haitian president, when presenting his credentials on 3 April, a message from Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez in which he assured provisional Haitian President Ertha Pascal Trouillot of his solid support and of his country's cooperation. Perez expressed the profound satisfaction of his government and of the Venezuelan people with the choice of Mrs. Trouillot as the president of the fraternal nation of Haiti.

The Venezuelan president said in his letter to Mrs. Trouillot that it was time a Haitian patriot (?beyond reproach) took in hand the work of guaranteeing the democratic process of the Haitian people, who have suffered much and who are struggling for freedom and justice.

Perez further said that he is sure Mrs. Trouillot's presence at the head of the nation will facilitate Haiti's movement toward a political system issuing from free, honest, democratic elections.

Presidential Decrees Change Public Administration

FL0504155690 Port-au-Prince L'UNION in French 4 Apr 90 No 320 p 3

[Text] Many changes have been made within the Public Administration by presidential decrees dated 30 March and 1 April.

Louis Christian Patrice Baptiste has been appointed director general of the National Potable Water Service [Service National d'Eau Potable] (SNEP).

Reynold Carre becomes the new director general of the National Land Registration Office [Office National du Cadastre] (Onaca).

Jacques Ted Syndic has been appointed director general of the National Office of Work Accident Insurance and Maternity Benefits [Office National d'Assurance Accident Travail Maternite] (Ofatma).

Brunel Delauney is the new director general of the Institute of Social Welfare and Research [Institut de Bien-Etre et de Recherche Social] (IBERS).

Furthermore, by presidential commissions dated 30 and 31 March and 1 April:

Meighan Christian is appointed SNEP director of operations and maintenance.

Jean-Baptiste Franck Nau is appointed APN [National Port Authority] director of security.

Edouard Beaubrun is appointed APN technical director.

Blaise Beauharnais is appointed APN comptroller general.

Louis Thermitus is appointed APN financial director.

Eddy Labossiere is appointed APN administrative director

Pierre Saint-Louis is appointed APN director of cabotage.

Richard Louis is appointed Electricity Company of Haiti [EDH] technical director.

Jose Saint-Firmin is appointed EDH director of planning.

Mrs. Murielle Millet Jean-Baptiste is appointed IBERS deputy director general.

Guy Jabon is appointed Ofatma deputy director general. Claude Bernard is appointed Ofatma medical director.

Port-au-Prince, 2 April 1990, Directorate of Information.

Narcisse Partisan Accused in PDCH Car Bombing

FL0504200490 Port-au-Prince Radio Antilles Internationales in French 1730 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Excerpts] A bomb went off last night at around midnight in a car owned by Reverend Sylvio C. Claude that was in the backyard of the Haitian Christian Democratic Party [PDCH] headquarters. [passage omitted] This incident occurred a few hours after a PDCH watchman was seriously threatened.

Partisans of Daniel Narcisse, who had come to clean up Narcisse's political party's headquarters, made virulent threats yesterday afternoon against the PDCH's watchman. The PDCH watchman did not pay any attention to these threats. However, a few hours later at midnight, there was an explosion and the night watchmen saw that Rev. Claude's vehicle was on fire. [passage omitted]

PDCH party members this morning captured (Roosevelt Frage), a member of the Democratic Assembly of Young Haitian Patriots, which is affiliated with Daniel Narcisse's Liaison Committee of the Democratic Forces. This (Roosevelt Frage) was among the people who had come shortly before the explosion to clean Daniel Narcisse's party's headquarters. He is accused of having participated in this incident. [passage omitted]

While (Roosevelt Frage) denies any responsibility in connection with the incident, a witness claims he saw (Frage) threaten the PDCH's night watchman. [passage omitted]

Soldier Flees Hijacked Aircraft, Disappears

FL0504162790 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1100 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Excerpts] The Mais Gate Airport crisis has come to an end. Soldier Pierre Gerald decided to leave the American Airlines plane this morning, at 0100. He, however, got away. He did not surrender to the police, and he probably fled with all the weapons he had on him. To date, no one knows where he went.

There was a lot of activity at the airport last night. Sirens wailed in an attempt to disturb Pierre Gerald's sleep while he was still on the plane. [passage omitted]

At 0100 this morning, he left the plane and escaped. [passage omitted]

There were more than 300 curious Haitians massed in front of the airport on the afternoon of 4 April, watching the soldier through the grillwork, and when he would appear on the passenger steps, they would applaud and yell. [passage omitted] He would wave to the crowd, weapon in hand. On 3 April, to show off his talents as a sharpshooter, he threw a bottle up in the air and shot it apart while it was still in the air. [passage omitted]

As we said, however, Pierre Gerald left the plane this morning at 0100 and ran away, and as of this moment, no one at all knows where he went. [passage omitted]

Hinche Barracks Revolt Reported Solved

FL0504201590 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1100 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Report by Hinche correspondent Moliere Richard]

[Excerpt] A delegation from the Haitian Armed Forces General Headquarters in Port-au-Prince arrived in Hinche on 3 April to investigate the revolt by the Hinche barracks soldiers on 2 April against their commanders. The delegation was headed by Colonel Serge Saint-Eloi and Major Diderot Sylvain.

According to sources, the delegation managed to control the situation and find a solution to the problem. For the time being, everything is reportedly calm and all three commanding officers have taken back their positions. [passage omitted]

New Teleco Director in Attempt To End Crisis

FL0504184690 Port-au-Prince L'UNION in French 4 Apr 90 No 320 p 3

[Excerpt] In an attempt to end the crisis at Teleco [Telecommunications d'Haiti, the national telephone company], the president of Teleco's board of directors, Serge Potel [name as published], who is the governor of the BRH [Banque de la Republique d'Haiti, the central bank], had to install a new Teleco director general, Leonce Limouzin, who has worked at Teleco for approximately 40 years. Limouzin replaces Lucien Adam.

It was decided just on the morning of 2 April to appoint Limouzin to head this enterprise. Readers will recall that on 31 March, the executive had chosen Jean Robert Denis, a former Adam advisor, to be director general. This appointment, however, was aborted.

The minute this choice was announced, Teleco employees began to protest against Denis. [passage omitted]

El Salavador

Diplomatic Ties With Nicaragua Said To Resume

PA0504134490 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Vice President Francisco Merino recently announced the resumption of diplomatic and commercial relations with the Nicaraguan people, arguing that this was a recognition of their democratic efforts.

At the same time that Merino made this announcement, the Armed Forces acknowledged that the Navy had, in the last few hours, captured two Nicaraguan fishing boats and their crews in the waters of the Gulf of Fonseca. They said that when the boats noticed the presence of Salvadoran Coast Guard cutters they attempted to flee, disobeying orders from the Salvadoran vessels.

Referring to the resumption of relations with Nicaragua, Merino said that El Salvador will have a full embassy in Managua, for relations between the two countries to be as cordial as possible.

Interview With FMLN Commander Sancho, Part 1

PA0504140990 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0029 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Part 1 of 4 of interview with Commander Eduardo Sancho Colomba alias Ferman Cienfuegos, member of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) General Command on 4 April; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Commander Eduardo Sancho, the negotiation process between our front and the government is being resumed today, 4 April, in Geneva. The government has sent a very low-level delegation. However, we have sent a delegation that includes a member of the General Command, and the Political Diplomatic Commission. What is your opinion of this situation.

[Sancho] First, I believe it would be suitable to remember what the political personalities of the current and past governments have said about negotiations: Revolutionaries always win negotiations; negotiations are a trick. In other words, they, themselves, have expressed distrust in this mechanism, an instrument that belongs to all the Salvadoran people and, as our people understand, should serve to attain a quick and immediate political solution that will permit the attainment of peace with justice.

[Reporter] It has been said that on this occasion the parties will actually begin a negotiation process. However, the most recent positions we have seen within Arena [Nationalist Republican Alliance] indicate that they are actually not wagering on the negotiations, but rather on the thesis that now the Sandinist National Liberation Front has lost [the elections], it is necessary to stall, because the death of the FMLN is just a matter of time. How can we expect positive results from a negotiating process if this is going on with a party like Arena.

[Sancho] It is a little suspicious that the government itself has attached little importance to the Geneva meeting because this is a political action in which the government was going to make a commitment with the UN Secretary General. I say this is actually suspicious because no one expected the government to send a delegation consisting of ambassadors who are already in Europe, who are completely unaware of the negotiation process, and [Justice Minister Oscar Alfredo] Santamaria. It is possible, and there is much suspicion among political circles and political analysts in this regard, that the government again wants to play a game. This time, however, I believe that the FMLN will have a serious response for beginning the search for negotiated solutions. We can say in advance that the government's attitude of not assigning it much importance is highly suspicious and diminishes the profile of the delegation. However, that is their problem and they will pay the cost of not taking the negotiations, that the people desire, seriously.

[Reporter] One of the comrades from the [Modesto Ramirez] Central Front has asked a very interesting question. His question was: If the government and the Armed Forces do not want to hold true negotiations, but rather merely formal negotiations, would the FLMN launch a second offensive, stronger than the 11 November offensive?

[Sancho] World public opinion favors a negotiated solution in El Salvador. There is really no more latitude with regard to continuing the war. However, there is no doubt that as long as the war is not over, and the war is not yet over, negotiations [words indistinct] so that the war finally ends. There is no doubt that there will always be room for military pressure, such that those sectors that are not yet convinced, can be convinced that the FMLN can still and should [words indistinct] military pressure. There is little chance that we are going to pull a military offensive out of our hat. However, any political analyst would agree that this is an available resource.

[Reporter] Will the Armed Forces and Arena interpret this as a threat from the FMLN?

[Sancho] I think that at this stage of the war there are no threats.

[Reporter] Is that a promise?

[Sancho] It is a promise. If the people ask for it, well, the people are in charge.

[Reporter] The sixth summit meeting of Central American presidents just ended in Montelimar, Nicaragua. We read the final agreement and said, begging Commander Daniel Ortega's pardon, that this document should have been called [words indistinct], as it contains mutual praise. What is in the future? How do you view

the future of these Central American summits as Nicaragua enters a new phase, even though the our country's problem remains unresolved.

[Sancho] I agree that Nicaragua was the only government that fully adhered to the Esquipulas agreements and 21 commitments. The Salvadoran Government should feel ashamed because it did not keep any of them. It could not even organize the reconciliation commission. It did not resolve anything. It was unable to democratize the country, and it will not demilitarize it either. That is why we feel that the future of the summit.... [changes thought] If no government is going to keep the agreements, it would be best not to have any more summits.

[Reporter] Commander, you just mentioned demilitarization. Nicaraguan President-elect Violeta Chamorro says she is supports demilitarization. The FMLN shares this view, and so do many social forces in the country. Considering the historic role the Armed Forces have played in our country, is it utopian to talk about the disappearance of the two armies in El Salvador? Is it utopian or a possibility in the medium term or short term?

[Sancho] We would agree with Violeta Chamorro, because if democracies are being established in Central America, there is no reason to have armies. We would need a process to eliminate the armies. Demilitarizing armies entails a gradual elimination of the armies until they are reduced to a civilian police force. In this respect, we agree with Mrs. Chamorro. As long as there is no democracy in Central America, demilitarization—at least in other countries—is difficult.

In El Salvador, the demilitarization will hinge upon the democratization process and the achievement of full democracy. Not until that moment will we [words indistinct] the FMLN and the Army.

[Reporter] This morning, Christian Democratic Party [PDC] President Fidel Chavez Mena said in a television interview that his party agrees with demilitarizing society and with several points that the FMLN has proposed. However, he believes that to solve the country's problems we have three plans—Arena's, the FMLN's, and the PDC's—and that we must unify the points of concurrence of these plans to (?stabilize) the country. Later, the people can vote on each of the three plans. How do you feel about the PDC stance, since he is talking of an agreement?

[Sancho] I think the PDC proposal should be examined more carefully. It has already been demonstrated that all of the country's forces and political trends cannot impose the hegemony of a single trend or a single political plan. History has shown that there can be no hegemonic project. Trying to impose or lead others to think there will be consultation [words indistinct] the three proposals to the people, will really do no good. This would amount to continuing to encourage hemogeny, and that would [word indistinct] the unity of the people to save the country from the fascists. We really need to isolate the fascists; we need the unity of the people to isolate the fascists, as we all know so well.

[Reporter] Commander, the fighters, even Salvadoran citizens in general, do not understand certain attitudes of the FMLN or some of the communiques issued by the FMLN General Command. We spent eight or nine years fighting the Christian Democratic Party and Jose Napoleon Duarte. We remember [words indistinct] the assassination of Herbert Anaya Sanabria. However, when Duarte died, a communique was issued declaring a truce so that the funeral could take place peacefully. How should we view all of these apparent changes of position by the FMLN?

[Sancho] As for Jose Napoleon Duarte, we have to point out that in addition to being a political force, the FMLN has human sensitivity. We thought it was appropriate for us to take this humane action by declaring a truce so that Mr. Duarte could be buried. We also have to mention that the PDC and all of the leftist forces of the country can contribute toward the depolarization of society. The truce was a gesture; it was to make the Salvadoran people see that it is possible to depolarize society and that each of us can make a contribution.

That is why we insist that one must not return to one's electoral or political hegemonic plans, because that would obstruct the unity of the people which is needed to isolate the fascists.

[Reporter] Commander, there was a discussion at the Legislative Assembly when Duarte died because the PDC legislators motioned naming him the father of democracy in El Salvador. [words indistinct] What is the difference between Jose Napoleon Duarte, who was in power for almost 10 years, and Roberto d'Aubuisson? What is the difference between these two politicians?

[Sancho] We believe that Duarte was a fighter for democracy. He had his own beliefs, he had his own personality, and he really had charisma; we cannot deny that. Of course, we cannot compare him to a criminal who is being sought by justice. I would say that D'Aubuisson is a fugitive from justice who has sought shelter from his immunity as a deputy. His immunity as a deputy does not preclude his crimes. There is no comparison between Duarte and [words indistinct] who is well-known, but is violent and unpopular.

[Reporter] To end the first part of the interview, are you optimistic about a possible concerted effort by popular and democratic forces in the country, or do you believe that each will go his own way. Are you optimistic about such a concerted effort?

[Sancho] A concerted effort in a political struggle of all the forces in the country should not only be seen as a possibility, but must be seen as a political necessity for the unity of all popular and national sectors because this would be the only formula to rebuild the country, to reunite the country, and to reconcile the country. This can only be done through a concerted political effort. I

believe there will be opportunities over the next few months for concerted political efforts which will really give new hope to the large majority of the Salvadoran people. We must not forget about the large majority of the Salvadoran people, because sometimes we speak on behalf of certain groups of the country and not on behalf of the majority.

Opposition Pleased With Negotiation Accord

PA0504192790 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1728 GMT 4 Apr 90

[Text] San Salvador, 4 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—The Salvadoran opposition is pleased with the agreement reached in Geneva today between President Alfredo Cristiani's government and the guerrillas for the resumption of dialogue. However, it expressed its reservations about the sincerity of government authorities.

Eduardo Colindres, a top Christian Democratic Party (PDC) leader, told ACAN-EFE that "we totally support" this agreement, which "opens up the possibility of achieving peace, reaching political agreements that can end the armed conflict, and establishing communication channels that can create a consensus among all sectors for reaching peace."

Guillermo Ungo, the secretary general of the social-democratic National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), told ACAN-EFE, "I think it is beneficial and positive and allows for the continuation of real negotiation between both parties under better conditions."

Ungo, however, questioned Cristiani's sincerity in the peace efforts by saying that the president has tried to diminish the level of importance of the Geneva meeting, and to prove it, he said that the delegation sent to Geneva, in his opinion, did not correspond to the importance of the meeting.

Today in Geneva, the government and the FMLN signed a declaration of principles to promote the peace process under the auspices of UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

The government delegation was headed by Justice Minister Oscar Santamaria and included the Salvadoran ambassadors to France and Italy, Ana Cristina Sol and Guillermo Paz Larin, and Carlos Ernesto Mendoza, charge d'affaires at the United Nations in Geneva.

The FMLN delegation was headed by Commander Jorge Shafik Handal, one of the top rebel leaders, and included Commander Ana Guadalupe Martinez, and also Commanders Roberto Canas and Salvador Samayoa, members of the FMLN political-diplomatic commission.

According to social democratic leader Ungo, the fact that the government delegation was a low-level one and the fact that Cristiani said that a formal ceremony for the signing of an agreement would only be held in Geneva, show the intention to diminish the importance of the efforts to resume dialogue, which has been suspended since last November.

Ungo also pointed out that the date and place of the meetings between the government and the guerrillas have not been set. He also mentioned that the Catholic Church, which had participated as a mediator in previous dialogues, was excluded from the meetings.

"The government has shown no sympathy for the archbishopric," Ungo said.

Ungo said, however, that the concept, that the UN secretary general should play a more important role as mediator, has prevailed. He also said there is the possibility that other countries or international organizations could participate, "which makes for more serious and compromising" negotiations to achieve peace.

Ungo also noted that the Salvadoran political parties and other social organizations of the country, according to the agreement, have an important role to play in the peace process. He said these efforts should be part of the Central American peace process, which includes democratization, demilitarization, and dialogue leading to a cease-fire so progress can be made toward demobilization and incorporation of the FMLN into the country's political life.

In addition, PDC leader Eduardo Colindres said "the change in the government's position is positive. It admits that to achieve peace it is necessary to reach preliminary political agreements in which political parties are allowed to participate because they are important forces favoring peace."

According to the PDC leader, "the government has understood that there cannot be peace without democracy. They are two inseparable aspects. To have peace, one must have democracy, and vice versa."

Colindres pointed out that the democratization, the reorganization of the judicial system, and the reforms to the electoral system must be some of the political agreements that the government and the guerrillas reach to end their war.

"If profound reforms are not made to the electoral system, we cannot talk about the FMLN's participation in the elections," Colindres said.

In Geneva the government and the guerrillas agreed on the format, the mechanism, and the rhythm of the process aimed at achieving a definite end to the armed conflict in El Salvador in the shortest time possible.

Perez de Cuellar, who read the declaration, said that the government and the FMLN promised to reach political agreements on the suspension of the armed conflict and actions against the rights of the civilian population, which will be verified by the United Nations.

The negotiation process should also lead to the incorporation of the FMLN into the legal and institutional life of the country, as long as guarantees and conditions are established for this purpose.

Both parties agreed that Perez de Cuellar must actively participate in the negotiation process, and they recognized the "important" role played by the political parties and representative social organizations in the process.

FMLN's Diaz on Resumption of Peace Talks

PA0604044490 Madrid EFE Spanish 0213 GMT 6 Apr 90

[Telephone interview with Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, FMLN, Commander Nidia Diaz on 5 April; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] Salvadoran rebel commander Nidia Diaz said today that the "political winds" that favor a negotiated solution to conflicts are consistent with the Salvadoran guerrillas' proposals and against "authoritarianism and the militarization of society."

Diaz added that conditions are better now for finding a political solution to the Salvadoran conflict, particularly after the signing on 28 March of an agreement between the FMLN and the Salvadoran Government in Geneva (Switzerland).

"There is a new current in the world that advocates a political solution to conflicts; this is consistent with the FMLN's desire for changes and against those trying to prevent a peaceful solution. Those positions will be rejected and isolated.

The Salvadoran Government and guerrillas agreed to resume the peace negotiations during the first week of May with the active participation of UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

According to Diaz, the FMLN "does not fear" changes, "on the contrary, it favors those changes." She added: "The notion that revolutionary guerrillas are unable to promote real democratic change has been dispelled."

During a telephone interview for a Salvadoran radio station, Diaz said that the FMLN will return to political life in El Salvador "if the results of the negotiations make it possible to reach an agreement to end the hostilities."

She added that "there is a favorable climate in El Salvador and in the international community for finding a political solution to the conflict."

The guerrilla commander described the participation of Colonel Mauricio Vargas, the Armed Forces representative in the government delegation, as "important." "It is important and necessary that a representative of the Armed Forces, the real power within Salvadoran society, be present," she stressed.

Vargas will be a part of the government delegation, along with Justice Minister Oscar Santamaria, Interior Minister Colonel Juan Martinez Varela, author and attorney David Escobar Galindo, Hernan Contreras, and attorney Abelardo Torres.

According to Diaz, the guerrilla delegation that attended the meetings in Mexico and Costa Rica in September and October last year, headed by Commanders Jorge Shafik Handal and Joaquin Villalobos, will be "reinforced with more experienced members."

State of Siege To End; No Extension Requested

PA0604043490 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0331 GMT 6 Apr 90

[Text] As of 11 April, the state of siege will be lifted throughout the country since the executive branch has not requested an extension from the Legislative Assembly during today's plenary session. Sources from the Legislative Assembly have confirmed that the government did not request extending the suspension on the right to organize and hold meetings as specified in the legislative decree approved last 9 March.

The state of siege was imposed by the Council of Ministers last 12 November as a result of the military offensive launched by the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] throughout the country.

Colonel Rene Emilio Ponce, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on 2 April that the Armed Forces would not ask for an extension as a sign of goodwill in the search for peace.

Army Troops, Rebels Clash on Capital's Outskirts

PA0604005690 Paris AFP in Spanish 0013 GMT 6 Apr 90

[Text] San Salvador, 5 Apr (AFP)—Official sources have confirmed that an intense clash between guerrillas and Army troops occurred this afternoon on the southern outskirts of the Salvadoran capital.

The armed clash began at 1740 (2340 GMT) on Huizucar Street. A military helicopter began to fly over the street, but details of the fighting are still unknown. Meanwhile, heavy rifle and artillery fire from both sides continues to be heard from different points of the city.

FMLN Claims 20 Army Casualties in Cabanas

PA0604034590 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 6 Apr 90

[Text] At 0330 on 5 April, FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Forces] forces carried out an action against two companies of the (JR) Battalion of the DM2 [Military Detachment No. 2] in Valle Nuevo and (Loma Pacha) in Villa Victoria jurisdiction in Cabanas Department. The enemy suffered 20 casualties, including a sergeant and a corporal, during two hours of fighting.

The enemy was supported with artillery fire from an O-2 plane and helicopter gunships. Our forces fulfilled their objective and withdrew without any problems.

Honduras

Nicaraguan Deserter's Helicopter Being Returned

PA0504163390 Tegucigalpa La Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1145 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Report by Francisco Valeriano]

[Text] At 1500 today, the Honduran Government will return the MI-25 military helicopter that arrived at the Hernan Acosta Mejia Air Force Base on 7 December 1988, piloted by Sandinist Air Force deserter Captain Edwin Estrada. The highly sophisticated military apparatus created much expectation when it arrived at the Honduran Hernan Acosta Mejia Air Force Base on that date, considering the $1 million reward publicly offered by the U.S. Government to anyone who deserted with that type of helicopter. Capt. Estrada, however, never appeared in public, and it is not known if he received the reward, even though he gave the reasons for his desertion in a written communique.

The helicopter will be returned from the Hernan Acosta Mejia Air Force Base in Tegucigalpa, where Sandinist Air Force pilots will arrive to take it back to Nicaragua.

Nicaragua

RN Says Military Activities Continue

PA0504203690 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1805 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 5 Apr (EFE)—The Nicaraguan Resistance (RN) said today that about 4,000 armed anti-Sandinists who are in Nicaragua cannot be disarmed over a short term and that they are still taking part in battles.

UN spokesman Alejandro Acevedo said today in Tegucigalpa that it would be "impossible" to disarm the contra military units that are operating in Nicaraguan territory before President-elect Violeta Chamorro assumes office on 25 April.

"It would be very difficult to concentrate all of the fighters in security camps inside Nicaragua during April," Acevedo said.

In his opinion, the RN's demobilization and disarmament inside Nicaragua "will take place after Dona Violeta replaces Daniel Ortega in the country's Presidency." In addition, he said that the new government is expected to offer adequate guarantees for the contras to return to civilian life. Acevedo said that "for the time being, the necessary guarantees do not exist; in fact, military activities continue inside Nicaragua."

The RN General Staff asserted today that "several military incidents occured in Matagalpa and Jinotega Departments" between 27 March and 2 April.

According to the contras, the Sandinist Air Force has carried out bombing raids "in the areas of Las Lomas del Nance, Sacaclis, Las Orquetas, Santa Ana, Cusuli and Santa Barbara, all of which are in Jinotega [Department]."

In this regard, the General Staff has said that the only demobilization and disarmament operation that is sure to be carried out is that of the RN forces in Honduran territory on 18 April.

The ceremony for the delivery of rebel weapons to the UN Observer Group in Central America will be carried out in Yamales, general headquarters of the anti-Sandinist forces in Honduras, 14 km from the Nicaraguan border.

Ortega Demands Contras Halt Military Offensive

PA0604023490 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0113 GMT 6 Apr 90

[Text] Managua, 5 Apr (ACAN-EFE)—Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega today demanded that the contras who refuse to demobilize and disarm "give up" any "military offensive" against the government.

At the ceremony in which the new ambassadors of Belize, Bolivia, and Colombia presented their credentials, Ortega charged that a sector of the contras thinks "the time has come to launch an offensive against the Sandinist government," but, he said, "such an action would not have domestic or international support."

Ortega, who will turn over power to Violeta Chamorro on 25 April, said "they (the contras) think the revolution has become weak and that, therefore, the time has come for the counterrevolution to seize power. That is madness."

The Sandinist leader said that if the rebels do not give up those "war plans," the Army "must act firmly to prevent those people from causing greater bloodshed."

Referring to the Montelimar declaration in which the five Central American presidents called for the demobilization of the contras before 25 April, Ortega said the contras are "internationally isolated."

Ortega said that for these reasons, the Army "must not lower its guard."

He also said it is "unacceptable" that the contras in Honduras enter Nicaragua to create their "own enclaves," because "those who enter our territory do so with plans to continue the war."

PDC's Fletes on Humberto Ortega's Appointment

PA0504181190 Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 2314 GMT 4 Apr 90

[Text] Adan Fletes Valle has stated that there can be no Sandinists in the new government, adding that signed agreements must be fulfilled. The Christian Democratic politician, a strong contender for the post of National Assembly president, today said he would like to think that Carlos Hurtado erred when he made statements to BARRICADA. Fletes Valle said that the Nicaraguan people voted for a true change and this must take place, adding that agreements are to be precisely implemented—not to be used as a front.

[Begin recording] [Fletes, in progress] ...totally lacks political realism and lacks knowledge of what is truly taking place in Nicaragua. I cannot believe that Dona Violeta will have to opt for this alternative. I believe that this is a hypothesis completely out of context with our reality. We have a process that results from agreements—the latest in Toncontin—that deal with demobilization of the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN]. The Central American presidents' agreements and the bilateral Nicaraguan agreement establishes the guidelines to be followed in implementing the demilitarization process in Nicaragua. That is why I do not believe in those alternatives.

I believe that the country is undergoing a process, which includes an end to the war—something the Sandinists were incapable of achieving—and the new government led by Dona Violeta will continue that process in a democratic way. It is dangerous to think along other lines. One day this man—I hope that BARRICADA has misconstrued his words—might think that the Army can be used for a labor movement. I think this should not.... [changes thought] I hope BARRICADA has misconstrued his words.

[Reporter] In another part of the interview, Engineer Carlos Hurtado, one of closest aides of the president-elect, states that they are not bound to abide by agreements signed in the Bambana Restaurant by the political council of the new government.

[Fletes] I think the statement has been manipulated by BARRICADA. I hope that is the case—if we are to believe that he is still an UNO [National Opposition Union] activist. When one signs a document one assumes a pledge. No one signs a document without assuming a pledge. This was precisely one of our complaints to Commander Daniel Ortega when he signed documents and failed to fulfill his pledges. He refused to fulfill his pledge.

We have chosen Dona Violeta, and she is a president who keeps her word. She is a lady who has proven that she keeps her word and that is why we always trust her. I think that it is most important to watch what Dona Violeta does and hear what she says to determine the truth. I believe Dona Violeta knows very well that one is bound to fulfill one's pledges—and she must. That is why one signs a document; there is no other way.

Consequently, I think that BARRICADA manipulated Engineer Carlos Hurtado's words. Also, Commander Humberto Ortega's statements that he would like to be chief of the Army in the Defense Ministry, that is something personal. I cannot deny him that right, but I can say that the Nicaraguan people are right in stating that there can be no Sandinist minister in Dona Violeta's cabinet. [end recording]

Lacayo on Retention, Other Topics

PA0504225190 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1743 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Managua, 5 Apr (ACAN - EFE)—The retention of General Humberto Ortega in the leadership of the Nicaraguan Army has become one of the "most sensitive topics" of the political transition, with only 20 days remaining before Violeta Chamorro assumes power, her advisers reported today.

At a news conference held today, Antonio Lacayo, Chamorro's son-in-law, who is considered the "strongman" of the new cabinet, raised the possibility that the current defense minister and brother of President Daniel Ortega might remain in the Nicaraguan Army.

"It is such a delicate topic that I dare not give my opinion publicly. I will only give it to Dona Violeta, so that she can decide whether or not he remains," Lacayo stated.

For Humberto Ortega to remain in the Armed Forces, he must resign from his posts within the party and his active membership in the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN), according to the protocol for transition signed between the incoming and outgoing governments on 27 March.

Humberto Ortega declared recently that he would be willing to meet these prerequisites to remain in the Army.

Asked why he considers the subject of Gen. Ortega's retention a sensitive topic, the adviser said that the general "symbolizes the years of war, the obligatory military service, and the government of his brother."

"But one must consider," Lacayo added, "that there is a commitment on the part of Dona Violeta to national reconciliation and decisions must not be made based on the past."

Lacayo said that all of Chamorro's cabinet members will be civilians and the president will be the supreme commander of the Armed Forces. At the same time, he dismissed the possibility of a military coup "regardless of what the decision of the president-elect may be."

"Military coups in Latin America are a thing of the pst. There would not be any government in the world who would support an initiative of this type. Therefore, the possibility is unlikely," Lacayo added.

Regarding the current political transition in Nicaragua, the head of the Chamorro transition team described it as "orderly and civilized."

"The commissions for the transfer of power are already working jointly, the delivery of weapons (to Sandinist militants) has died down and relations between the incoming and outgoing governments are cordial and constructive," Lacayo asserted.

Regarding the demobilization of the contras, Lacayo said that the rebels stationed in the Honduran camps have already agreed to turn their weapons in 18 April and have expressed concern over those who have infiltrated into Nicaraguan territory in the past few days.

Lacayo was unable to estimate the number of contras who are now in Nicaraguan territory, but Aristides Sanchez, political head of the anti-Sandinists, recently put the figure at 10,000 men.

"I cannot undrstand why the contras have entered Nicaragua. What this does is hinder the work of ONUCA (the mission of UN military observers for Central America, to whom the weapons will be delivered)."

Lacayo also declined to talk about the dates for the total demobilization of the contras "because this will happen only when the best conditions for it exist; it is difficult to part with a weapon one has depended on for a long time."

He said that the main problem that the Chamorro government will have to contend with will be "stopping the hyperinflation and the $12 billion debt." "Another problem we will face will be the number of weapons in circulation, because many have been distributed in Nicaragua," he added.

After noting that Violeta Chamorro will be the president of Nicaraguans, not of UNO (the opposition alliance of 14 parties that won the elections of 25 February), he added that the new head of state will be the only person to decide on the composition of the new government.

Correction to D'Escoto on Contras, Future Plans

PA0504040390

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "D'Escoto Discusses Contras, Future Plans," published in the 5 April Latin America DAILY REPORT, page 37:

Page 38, column one, seventh paragraph, first sentence, make read: ...:a center for meditation [espiritualidad] and nonviolence.... (replacing word "mediation" with "meditation")

Panama

Endara on First 100 Days, Mexican Relations

PA0604022590 Panama City Telemetro Television in Spanish 2309 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] President Guillermo Endara Galimany today assessed his first 100 days in office and diplomatic relations with the Mexican Government. President Endara was sought today by local reporters who wanted him to comment on his first 100 days in office. Many observers feel that this period demonstrates a slow but sure turn toward the government's new course in the face of the overwhelming economic problems affecting the country.

The president, appearing in good spirits, said he hopes Panamanians will achieve the basic objectives of all democratic governments. He stressed that only through his government's good faith and honesty will the country recover soon, in spite of the fact that when this government took over it found a nation which was practically destroyed.

[Begin recording] [Endara] I think we have accomplished much. When we assumed power, there was an unbelievably bad situation. We took over at a time when there was practically no authority in the Republic. There was no executive branch; there was no judicial branch; there was no legislative branch; there was no Public Force; there was no police force. There was absolutely nothing. There was total anarchy.

We took over all public power [poder publico]. When I say we, I mean the president and the two vice presidents, under circumstances that were completely new in our history. We assumed full power and we have been letting go of power in a democratic manner. We have chosen a Supreme Court of Justice that honors the name of the Supreme Court. On this basis, we have formed a judicial branch that is truly independent, and we guarantee its independence at all times.

Based on the people's will, as expressed in various documents, we have chosen—or rather, the people have chosen—their legislative branch. There are still nine members whom the people will elect in nine districts. In addition, we have already established peace and social order.

We are about to plunge into the future, to plunge into where we were heading: a better and greater Panama, as Arnulfo Arias used to say; toward a Panama that we can leave to our children and grandchildren. Now that 100 days have passed, we are truly in an unbelievably better situation than when we began.

[Reporter] Why did you make those statements against the Government of Mexico?

[Endara] [chuckling] I would rather leave Mexico alone. I have promised the Foreign Ministry, rather, I have asked the Foreign Ministry to handle the situation from

now on. Right now we are at a purely diplomatic stage and I must admit that although I am a very calm man, sometimes I am not very diplomatic. [end recording]

The president also referred to the economic problems and possible U.S. Government assistance to our country. The newsmen then asked him when he expects this aid to be approved.

[Begin recording] [Endara] I hope that when I travel to Washington on 29 April at the invitation of President Bush, this will be a visit to thank the U.S. Government and people. Therefore, I hope it will be approved by that date.

[Reporter] What about the National Reconciliation Commission?

[Endara] I am waiting for Monsignor McGrath to send me a letter on that. [end recording]

Linares on Mexican Reaction to Endara Statements

PA0504190990 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2332 GMT 4 Apr 90

[Text] During a news conference today, Foreign Minister Julio Linares said that he understands why the Mexican Foreign Secretariat protested against President Endara's statement that the Mexican Government thrives on fraud. However, a Panamanian Foreign Ministry note points out that the unjustified attacks against Endara's legitimate and legally established government and his reaction to such attacks were the cause and effect of situations that the two parties must overcome for the sake of their friendship.

The explanatory note mentions that the Mexican Government has not replied to letters sent by the Panamanian Foreign Ministry, that Panamanian diplomatic representatives have not been received by Mexico's Foreign Secretariat, that several dozen Panamanians who are studying in Mexico were almost expelled recently without explanation, and that Panamanian representatives have been excluded without justification from activities that involve the diplomatic corps accredited in Mexico.

The note adds that the aforementioned situation is not in keeping with statements by the Mexican diplomatic representation in Panama that relations between the two countries have not been interrupted, because Mexico faithfully follows the Estrada Doctrine, and that the Mexican ambassador is not here because he is on vacation.

The note states that more recently, international press agencies have echoed statements attributed to the Mexican Foreign Secretary, which, when compounded by the aforementioned situation, led President Endara to publicly voice his dissatisfaction with behavior that he considers unfair and uncalled for, in statements that we have already heard and to which the Mexican Foreign Secretariat's protest note refers:

[Begin Linares recording] The Panamanian Foreign Ministry understands the reaction of the Mexican Foreign Secretariat. However, it also believes that the unjustified attacks against the legitimate and legally established government of Guillermo Endara Galimany and to his reaction to such attacks, were the cause and effect of situations that both parties must overcome for the sake of the traditional friendship that has always united our peoples.

The Foreign Ministry takes advantage of this opportunity to reiterate to the Mexican Embassy its highest and distinguished consideration. 3 April 1990. [end recording]

During the news conference, on behalf of the national government, Foreign Minister Linares rejected the Group of Eight's final declaration, because there is nothing to legitimize. However, he pointed out that upcoming constitutional amendments will help gauge approval of the Endara Government. Foreign Minister Linares also commented on those exiled in embassies accredited to Panama:

[Begin Linares recording] In Panama, 85 people have requested asylum and 26 of them have voluntarily surrendered or come out. We have issued 50 safe-conducts. Four people did not request asylum, I mean, safe-conducts. Of those who have received safe-conducts, five have returned to the country: Hernando Franco and family, and Mr. Cesar Gaitan.

What does this mean? It means that Panama has denied asylum to five out of 85 people. The Foreign Ministry has denied safe-conducts to Majors [rank as heard] Sucre, Gonzalez, and Gaitan. They are involved in murders, not just the murder of a single person because some of these military men are charged with five or six murders. Moreover, according to international law, there is a clause called the Belgian Clause on Attacks [Atentado] stating that murder by a head of state or his family members, even if for political reasons, is considered a common crime. Therefore, if murder by a head of state or a family member is considered a common crime, how can we say that people charged with murders are delinquent and are being persecuted for political reasons? The other case involves Mr. Rafael Arosemana who is charged with mishandling more than $21 million. [end recording]

More on Linares Comments

PA0604012090 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 5 Apr 90 pp A-1, A-2, B-8

[Article by Claudio Herrera J.]

[Text] Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio Linares attributed yesterday's statements on Mexico by President Guillermo Endara to statements made by Mexican Foreign Secretary Fernando Solana on the expulsion of Panama from the Group of Eight.

During a news conference that lasted more than an hour, the foreign minister explained the situation that has resulted from what he described as a growing deterioration of relations between the two countries.

The situation became worse on 31 March during a demonstration in Changuinola, Bocas del Toro, when Endara said: "Down with the Mexican foreign secretary" ["Fuera el canciller Mexicano"].

Endara's statements were in response to Solana's announcement that Panama had definitely been excluded from the "Group of Rio" or the "Group of Eight"; and for demanding, in this Central American country, new elections without foreign interference and with respect for the people's right to freely choose their own leaders.

"The Panamanian Government has been legitimized by the people. It was legitimized at the polls on 7 May (1989). We do not want to be legitimized by a government like the Mexican foreign secretary's government because it is a government that is the result of electoral tricks by the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]," Endara said in Changuinola.

Regarding the situation that resulted following these statements, yesterday at noon Foreign Minister Linares said that President Endara's reaction was not the result of the Group of Eight statement, which was read on 31 March. On 30 March, prior to the conclusion of the meeting of the Group of Eight that was held in Mexico, foreign news agencies reported that the Mexican foreign secretary had said that Panama had been expelled from that organization.

Linares stressed that Solana made his statement on 30 March, whereas the Group of Eight statement was not read until 31 March. This is why Endara reacted on 31 March, but not as a result of the reading of the Group of Eight statement.

The statement issued by the Group of Eight (seven without Panama) reiterates the need for the foreign troops in Panama to limit their activities exclusively to their bases, as is established in the canal treaties signed by Panama and the United States, and refrain from interfering in matters that pertain strictly to Panama.

Likewise, the statement stressed that the process of democratic legitimization in Panama calls for an election without foreign interference and one which will guarantee respect for the people's right to freely choose their leaders.

Regarding the reports on Solana's statements released by the foreign news agencies, Linares said he cannot say whether what was said is true or not, but the truth is that the foreign news agencies did file those reports.

Linares told the local and foreign correspondents about the 2 April protest note sent by the Mexican Foreign Secretariat "strongly protesting" the remarks on Mexico and its foreign secretary made by President Endara on Saturday, 31 March, in Changuinola, Bocas del Toro Province.

"The Foreign Secretariat believes that statements like the ones made by Mr. Endara prove that he did not have adequate information on the recent Group of Rio meeting, and they are not in accordance with the mutual respect that must prevail in relations among states," the note stresses.

The Mexican Foreign Secretariat contends that Endara's statements "seem to overlook the traditional relationship of friendship and cooperation that has existed between Mexico and Panama throughout the years."

It recalls that "within this context, it is fitting to remember the important effort that was carried out throughout 1989 through the 21st Consultative Meeting of OAS Foreign Ministers, together with the other countries of the hemisphere, regarding the situation in Panama in an effort to achieve democracy, the free determination of peoples, and nonintervention."

It also expresses the hope that the Panamanian authorities "will adopt pertinent measures to guarantee the safety of its diplomatic mission and its personnel, refugees under the embassy's protection, and Mexican nationals residing in that country."

For its part, the Panamanian Foreign Ministry responded to the note sent by its Mexican counterpart listing a number of irregularities in that northern country's diplomatic behavior toward Panamanian authorities.

It listed the following:

—Several notes from the Panamanian Embassy in Mexico to the Mexican Foreign Secretariat since early January 1990 have not been answered, and receipt of these has not been acknowledged.

—Panamanian diplomatic representatives in Mexico stopped being received by Mexican Foreign Secretariat authorities, even though some urgent problems required direct personal efforts to solve them.

—With no explanation for the decision, several dozen Panamanian students were almost expelled from Mexico, and the Panamanian deputy foreign minister had to hurriedly make an emergency visit to Mexico and exert effort at the highest level of the Mexican Foreign Secretariat to keep the expulsion from being carried out.

—On more than one occasion, Panamanian diplomatic representatives were not invited to activities which had to be attended by the diplomatic corps, most particularly, the Spanish-American diplomatic representatives.

The Panamanian note to Mexico adds that "the recounted events do not conform with statements repeatedly made by the Mexican diplomatic mission in Panama to the effect that relations have not been interrupted, because the Mexican Government faithfully adheres to the Estrada Doctrine, and that the absence of the ambassador is because the ambassador is on vacation."

The Panamanian Foreign Ministry refers to President Endara's controversial statements about the Mexican Government in the following manner:

"Recent international press reports have quoted statements attributed to the foreign secretary which, when added to the aforementioned circumstances, led President Endara to publicly state his displeasure over a behavior that he considered unjust and uncalled for in terms that are already known and that are referred to in the protest note from the Foreign Secretariat.

The Panamanian Foreign Ministry also told the Mexican Secretariat that, although it understands its reaction, it also regards as unjustified the attacks that have been made against "the legitimate and legally constituted government of Guillermo Endara Galimany" and Panama's reaction to these attacks has resulted in a situation that should be overcome for the sake of the "traditional friendship that has always united our peoples."

The foreign minister said that although Panama wants to maintain diplomatic relations with all the countries of the world, particularly with Latin American countries because of their common heritage stemming from language and religion, among others; if that wish is not shared by other nations, it is within Panama's sovereign prerogative to make a decision in that regard.

Also, Linares said he learned from an article published by the tabloid EL SIGLO that former Government and Justice Minister Rodolfo Chairi de Leon had reportedly requested asylum at the Mexican Embassy .

Regarding that embassy, he said that Rafael Arosemana, former manager of the National Bank of Panama, is a common criminal because he is implicated in the mismanagement of up to $21 million in funds of that institution, for which reason he cannot be granted a safe-conduct.

Although he admitted that Endara was able to occupy the Presidency thanks to the U.S. military action, "something he did not cause, did not request, and repudiated as a presidential candidate and after he won the elections"; he said that President Endara's mandate "did not emanate from that military action but from the will of the Panamanian people expressed at the polls on 7 May 1989." The reality is that "when the incidents occurred, President Endara had two options: to accept the presidency or not to accept the presidency," he added.

Linares said that if Endara had not accepted the presidency, it would have resulted in a power vacuum, and someone would have had to fill it.

He said that if Endara, because of certain scrupples, had not agreed to head the government, and the same men who were the coauthors of the past dictatorship had remained, the Panamanian people would never have forgiven him for that.

Linares denied that the right of asylum has not been respected in Panama. In that regard, he explained that in this country 85 persons have requested asylum. Of those, 26 turned themselves in or left the country voluntarily. Furthermore, 50 safe-conducts were granted and four persons did not need safe-conducts (Spanish members of the ETA who sought refuge with Noriega at the Nunciature).

Of the persons who were granted safe-conducts, five have returned to the country and are among us. They are Hernando Franco and members of his family and Mr. Cesar Gaitan, Linares announced.

He said that the status of the various people who have taken asylum in Panama is not the same. He expressed amazement that the only thing that concerns the Group of Eight is a norm having to do with the suitability of the state of asylum, "when I think that what should be of concern is not only the fulfillment of that norm but of the entire convention."

"A convention is not made up of one or two norms," Linares said, regarding the interpretation he considers the Group of Eight has given to the Caracas Convention on Diplomatic Asylum (1954).

This foreign minister recognized and did not deny the right that each country granting asylum has to classify the type of crime committed by the person seeking asylum, Linares said. On this basis, he denied that safe-conducts have been granted irresponsibly.

However, Linares clarified that the Asylum Convention is not composed of one rule, but has others. In this regard, he mentioned that asylum should only serve to defend and protect those who suffer political persecution, not those sought for common crimes.

When referring to the cases of former Major Heraclides Sucre and Captain Gonzalo Gonzalez, who belonged to the former Defense Forces, Linares said that safe-conducts had not been issued to them because they have cases pending with the government district attorney which include murder charges.

Regarding Asuncion Gaitan—under refuge at the Apostolic Nunciature—Linares said that he also has a file pending with the government district attorney.

Sucre and Gonzalo Gonzalez are at the Peruvian Embassy. Luis "Lucho" Gomez, who is under the protection of the Cuban Embassy, has not been granted a safe-conduct either because he has been implicated in a torture case.

Linares referred to a plebiscite aimed at reforming the Constitution, which had been announced by Endara when the Legislative Assembly was installed. Linares said that if the reform projects are approved by this legislature, they would need to be approved by the second legislature, which ends in December.

He added that after the second legislature approves the projects in September, October, or November, the plebiscite could take place on 20 December.

The opinion of the Panamanian foreign minister is that the approval of these reforms would gauge the degree of acceptance of the Endara government.

The reforms to the Constitution, according to what Endara said before the legislative branch, would be aimed more at democratizing the Constitution and removing elements placed there by the past dictatorship.

Police Personnel Chief Aleman Removed From Post

PA0504181590 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 3 Apr 90 p 1

[Report by Manuel Alvarez Cedeno]

[Text] A police source has confirmed that National Police Personnel Chief Miguel Aleman, whose arrest has been ordered on charges of abuse of authority, was removed from his post yesterday and replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Gerardo Garcia.

Migdalia Nunez, the district attorney in Cocle Province, had officially ordered Aleman's "immediate removal from his post" along with his arrest, and also the arrest of former Lieutenant Colonel Anibal Maylin and Sergeant Dimas Gonzalez, who in 1986 committed "crimes against private property and abused authority."

A spokesman from the National Police, one of the four sections of the Public Force, who asked to remain anonymous, confirmed the dismissal to LA PRENSA.

Ramon Martin, secretary of the judicial technical police, explained that the arrest warrant was sent to Lieutenant Colonel Eduardo Herrera, chief of the National Police, "so you carry out the arrest, because Aleman is one of your subordinates." The source added that it is possible Aleman may already be under arrest.

The Cocle Province prosecutor who ordered Aleman's dismissal and arrest also appealed the decision on the amount of Maylin and Gonzalez' bail, which Cocle Second District Court Judge Gisela Lopez set at $145,200 each.

Nunez said a bail of $145,200 was set for each of the defendants because the judge determined that the stolen property totals about $290,400.

"We filed an appeal because we believe the bail should be set higher. We estimate the total amount of the stolen property to be $400,000," Nunez added.

The documents on this case will be sent to the Second Superior Tribunal in Cocle, which will rule on the appeal.

Nunez told LA PRENSA over the telephone that the arrest of Aleman, Maylin, and his secretary, Sgt. Gonzalez, was ordered because they committed "crimes against private property and abused their authority."

Regarding this case, the prosecutor explained that in 1986, after the DENI [National Department of Investigations] conducted a search at "La Villa" farm in Anton in Cocle Province, which belonged to a Cuban-born U.S. citizen by the name of Lazaro Gomez, the former Defense Forces "illegally occupied the estate and took away over 700 cattle and the equipment on the farm.

The prosecutor added that when this took place, Aleman was chief of the Cocle 6th Military Zone. He was then replaced by Maylin. "It seems they transferred the custody of the farm and the equipment, and the cattle got lost between the two administrations," she added.

"There is overwhelming proof and certainly enough reason to order the arrest of these people. We are also investigating whether any more people are involved in the matter," the prosecutor said.

Argentina

Envoy to U.S. Comments on Negotiations With IMF

PY0504230390 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1400 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 5 Apr (NA)—The IMF director will approve "between next Monday and Tuesday [9 and 10 April]" a letter of intent from the Argentine Government. This letter of intent is designed to release disbursements from an approved $1.4-billion standby loan.

Guido di Tella, the Argentine ambassador in Washington, explained today that, for the decision to be implemented on the scheduled dates, it is necessary to follow "a ritual from which one cannot deviate an inch." This procedure includes the presentation of a draft of the memorandum of understanding, its analysis, its presentation to IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus, and its submittal to the IMF directorate.

The letter of intent could be approved today by Camdessus. This means that the directorate will give its final approval without any additional procedures.

Speaking from the U.S. capital for Radio Mitre, Di Tella explained that "Minister Erman Gonzalez' program includes a primary surplus [superavit primario]" in fiscal accounts and that "the strategy on the payment of interest" on overdue debts will depend on this.

Regarding negotiations with the private banks, the diplomat said that "in order to negotiate with the banks, the IMF's steps must be taken first. Talks have already been held in Montreal, however, and progress will be made now that we are putting relations with the IMF on the right track."

Di Tella added that "the conversion of debt into risk investment, to privatize state-run enterprises, would mean a massive elimination of part of the debt and will even support future securities purchases on the secondary market," where they are quoted at 12 percent of their face value.

Di Tella said that Gonzalez made "a very eloquent description of the Argentine economic program, without being arrogant, stating that the exceptional situation of the past 30 days is not the end of the story" at yesterday's meeting with Camdessus.

The economy minister will meet today with U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady and with Federal Reserve Director Alan Greenspan. Gonzalez will meet tomorrow with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and World Bank President Barber Conable before returning to Argentina. Gonzalez is scheduled to return to Argentina on 7 April.

Economy Minister Meets U.S. Treasury's Brady

PY0604002090 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1935 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Washington, 5 Apr (TELAM)—Argentine Economy Minister Antonio Erman Gonzalez said this afternoon that U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady believes that the current Argentine economic program "is the process that will lead the country out of the current crisis." Gonzalez noted that after the 45-minute meeting Brady asked him "to be firm in continuing to implement the plan to prevent new frustrations."

Argentine ambassador in Washington, Guido Di Tella, who also attended the meeting, said that "Argentina has never been so close to achieving full economic stabilization."

Economy Minister Comments on Yacyreta Project

PY0504173090 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0002 GMT 3 Apr 90

[Text] Montreal (Canada), 3 Apr (TELAM)—Economy Minister Antonio Erman Gonzalez said here tonight that the possibility of temporarily suspending the construction of the Yacyreta hydroelectric dam project, because of possible corruption, "is a decision for the Argentine Government to review."

After a coordinating meeting at his hotel with legislators from the different parties participating in the IDB meeting, Gonzalez said that "we will review if it is necessary to suspend the work." He added that he will review this issue after he returns to Buenos Aires. Gonzalez is scheduled to return to Buenos Aires this weekend.

Gonzalez also said that a measure of this type will not affect a loan signed yesterday with the IDB [Inter-American Development Bank] to secure $250 million for the Yacyreta dam that is under construction on the Paraguayan border. The minister explained that this credit, the third such loan Argentina has obtained from the IDB, had already been granted in December. Between January and March "we, together with the IDB, analyzed the need to rationalize, reorganize, and rechannel resources; this is practically what we are doing with the enterprise (bilateral) through the implementation of most of the measures contained in Decree 435." The decree refers to the reduction of public expenditures.

Gonzalez said that his signing a contract yesterday and announcing stoppage of the project today is not contradictory. He said: "They are complementary, because we are going to analyze whether the suspension is necessary, whether it is feasible with this credit, and also whether it is convenient."

He disclosed that some contracts could be reviewed and renegotiated, "especially those in which the costs seem to be excessively high", but added that these studies will be carried out after he returns to Buenos Aires. He also said that this issue was being analyzed over the past few

weeks and that "the banks had noticed some cost increases that do no seem justified."

Minister Gonzalez denied that a hypothetical suspension of the project could jeopardize negotiations he will carry out the day after tomorrow with the World Bank, which also co-finances the dam. He said: "By no means, because it is just one chapter of the many credits we are discussing with the World Bank."

The Yacyreta (which means moon stone) dam is being built at a total cost—according to the agreement signed yesterday—of $5.9862 billion, and so far only 53 percent of it has been completed. The first turbine is scheduled to become operational in 1993 and the last one in late-1996. According to the terms of the aforementioned agreement, the operation of this dam will allow a saving of $120 to $168 million per year in fossil fuel costs for generating electricity. The IDB had previously made two disbursements for a total of $460 million.

Menem: 'Not Talking About Canceling'

PY0504192390 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Excerpts] This morning President Carlos Menem said that the rally to be held tomorrow in the Plaza de Mayo in support of his government will prove that the Argentine people are not as pessimistic or as skeptical as some believe. [passage omitted]

President Menem also ratified his recent comment that Yacyreta is a monument to corruption. He said that Yacyreta, obviously, was not working properly. Some of its mechanisms [mechanismos] are out of order, incredible sums of money have been invested in the construction, and yet the work to dam the river has still not started and will cost, at least, another $3 or 4 million.

He added that he is not talking about canceling the Yacyreta project but that he is just considering more exhaustive studies to prevent any further setbacks because the Argentine people will have to pay for this project in the end.

Menem's Measures To Rationalize Public Companies

PY0504124290 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0142 GMT 29 Mar 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 29 Mar (TELAM)—The main measures that were announced by President Carlos Menem and Economy Minister Antonio Gonzalez to rationalize the public sector, were adopted through Decree 584. They are as follows:

—Beginning 1 May, the services rendered by public enterprises under the Economy Ministry, will be billed to consumers monthly, and can be paid up to the tenth of the month after the closing date of each bill.

—The enterprises' trustees, or high-ranking authorities, are responsible for the payment of welfare sector contributions, taxes, and regular contributions on the correct form and date. If they fail to do so, the Economy Ministry can order the automatic transfer of the funds to the creditors.

—The meter reading service and the preparation and distribution of public enterprise invoices will be privatized. The national and international bidding for these companies will be conducted before 1 July 1990.

—The public services bills can be paid at all banks, private or official.

—Economy Ministry trustees will be appointed for purchases, personnel, finances and treasury, preparation of invoices, and all other areas that may need their supervision.

—In the shortest time possible, the services of national or international purchasing agencies will be contracted, through national and international public bidding, for the total or partial purchases required by the public enterprises.

—All commercial advertising about public enterprises is entirely forbidden. In 15 days, the public companies' officials must report on contracts under way, which can be revoked whenever deemed convenient.

—The deposit accounts of all public enterprises will be consolidated into a "Unified Fund of National Government Accounts," that will function at the Central Bank headquarters. The monthly financial surpluses yielded by the public enterprises will be deposited in this fund beginning the day the decree goes into force.

—The public enterprises are forbidden to open new bank accounts, without the specific authorization of the Public Enterprises Undersecretariat. Beginning 1 April, the entities can only trade debts among them for a maximum term of 30 days.

—Within the shortest time possible, the Central Bank will have to inform the Public Enterprises Undersecretariat about the total number of bank accounts that the enterprises have.

—Every two weeks, the enterprises will report on the movement of their funds to the Public Enterprises Undersecretariat, which will publish, every 30 days, a report on the status of these accounts. The enterprises will also have to publish a quarterly report on their accountings.

—The private and official financial entities will have to send the Public Enterprises Undersecretariat—through the Central Bank—the balance of their bank accounts the first working day of each month.

Senator Menem Leaves for UK; Comments on Dam

PY0504122290 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 0200 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Senator Eduardo Menem has announced the government's decision to conduct an investigation into the Yacyreta dam project, which was described as a monument to corruption by President Carlos Menem.

Senator Menem, along with Senator Eduardo Gass and Juan Manuel Casella, a radical leader from Buenos Aires Province, traveled to London today to participate in a non-governmental meeting with British legislators to strengthen the relations between the two countries.

Discussing the issue of Yacyreta before his departure, the Justicialist Party senator said that if the deadlines for the project and some totally unproductive expenditures were reviewed, one could presume that the project has been handled in a very irregular fashion. The government is determined to investigate, straighten it out, and put things in their proper place.

Menem emphasized that this binational Argentine-Paraguayan project is perhaps the most expensive project ever implemented in the country, and one of the most important projects. Therefore, it has been decided to aim high in order to put an end to these irregularities and complete the project.

Concerning the London meeting, Menem pointed out that the legal and economic aspects of the agreement recently signed between the two countries, as well as matters on fishing and communications between the mainland and the Malvinas Islands, will be considered.

Meanwhile, Senator Gass said that on one of their previous two trips to the United Kingdom they were willing to seek an understanding based on UN resolutions, and that now the methods have changed. We will see if the much-publicized umbrella agreement does not freeze this for once and for all, and that the next government will sit at the negotiating table to discuss the Malvinas sovereignty issue.

Foreign Minister Cavallo To Begin European Tour

PY0504161290 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1233 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 5 Apr (Telam)—Argentine Foreign Minister Domingo Cavallo today will begin a nine-day tour of Paris, London, Dublin, and Budapest, during which he will meet for the first time with his British counterpart Douglas Hurd, in the wake of the recently resumed diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Cavallo will also hold a meeting with Argentine ambassadors to the EEC, and will participate in the deliberations between the foreign ministers of the "Rio de Janeiro Group" and of the EEC. He will also attend the scheduled meeting between the Rio de Janeiro Group and the foreign ministers of East European countries in Budapest.

According to an official Foreign Ministry report, Cavallo will leave the Ezeiza International Airport at 1700 [2000 GMT] today for Madrid, and after a few hours in the Spanish capital he will leave for Paris, where tomorrow he will meet with the Argentine ambassadors to the EEC countries.

At that meeting they will discuss the provisions of the agreement signed a few days ago in Luxembourg between Argentina and the EEC, and will also discuss the current situation in Europe. The meeting will end on the afternoon of 7 April.

The following day Cavallo will leave for London, and that same night he will participate in a dinner given in his honor by Robert Maxwel, a well-known businessman of the social communications sector.

Next Monday at 0845 London time (0545 Argentine time), Cavallo will meet with Douglas Hurd, U.K. Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. This will be the most outstanding event of his trip. The two ministers will discuss, among other things, the state of bilateral relations in the wake of the recent resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

At the end of the meeting, Cavallo will attend the opening session of the world conference on drugs that will be held for two days in London, with the purpose of reducing the demand for drugs, and to fight the cocaine threat. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher will also be present at that meeting, and for this reason the Argentine foreign minister will probably hold a short talk with her. By noon, Cavallo will grant a news conference, the last activity in London before departing that evening for Dublin, Ireland.

Once in Ireland, the program of activities includes a meeting between the President of Ireland and the foreign ministers of the Rio de Janeiro Group. On Tuesday, the EEC foreign ministers will join the meeting.

On Wednesday, Cavallo will arrive in Budapest, Hungary, and in the afternoon he will meet the Argentine ambassadors to East European countries and to the Holy See. The following day, as a member of the Rio de Janeiro Group, he will participate in the meeting between the foreign ministers of the Rio de Janeiro Group and the East European countries.

On Friday, 13 April, Cavallo will leave Budapest for Madrid, where he will take Argentine Airlines flight 147 for Buenos Aires. He is expected to arrive at 0930 on 14 April, thus concluding his trip.

Government Declares State of Social Emergency

PY0504190490 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2110 GMT 4 Apr 90

[Text] Buenos Aires, 4 Apr (EFE)—The Argentine Government today declared a "state of emergency in the food, health, social assistance, housing, and administrative sectors," for the purpose of "avoiding the discontinuation of social services to the people" because of the serious economic crisis that the country is experiencing.

Government sources reported that the Presidency today empowered the Health Ministry to request the cooperation of other official organizations, whatever their category, for adopting the appropriate measures for the emergency.

The decision was enforced through a decree signed by Argentine President Carlos Menem. The decree states that, despite the government decision to reduce public spending as much as possible, the strict enforcement of this policy can cause "serious practical consequences for priority objectives favoring the neediest segments of the population."

The decree says that the Health Ministry's human and material resources are "essential" for protecting the majority of the population, "who are the victims of the economic imbalances that the nation is suffering." According to official reports, 9 million people in Argentina now live in extreme poverty.

Editorial Deems TV Marti 'Invasion' of Cuba

PY0504221390 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 5 Apr 90 p 6

[Editorial: "Airwaves Invade Cuba"]

[Text] TV Marti started broadcasting to Cuba from Miami a few days ago. A satellite consisting of an enormous balloon stationed over a certain area of the Caribbean, very close to the coast of the Castrist fief [feudo], has fueled the beginning of a publicity campaign about what is really happening on the island. This campaign is based on so many truths, charges, and revelations that Havana can hardly fight it. We have every reason to believe that Cuba is being invaded via the airwaves. This operation reminds us of the frustrated invasion attempt at the Bay of Pigs, which cost the lives of hundreds of Cuban exiles.

This bloodless invasion of the most exclusive center of the Soviet colonialist system in Latin America is similar to the one that began many years ago in the East European satellite countries. The invasion started with a radio assault some 20 years ago and was followed by television programs that ended up by being received by practically every set in the communist states.

A long time before it was torn down, the Berlin Wall had already been punctured—we could even say bypassed—through the radio and television airwaves. At a certain point the "wall of infamy" was, from this point of view, a mere paper curtain that did not offer any resistance to the penetration of the radio-television waves of West Europe. We have not given enough emphasis to the West European and U.S. communications networks' penetration and opening of the Bolshevik world that had begun to crumble behind the wall.

The garrulous leader in Havana did not take long to react to the television invasion. His military apparatus, however, which is manufactured and financed by Moscow, can do nothing against this invasion. He also threatened to invade—"bloodlessly" he said—the U.S. airwaves, but no one pays any attention to his bragging or to his six or seven-hour speeches to delirious crowds assembled by the administration.

Circumstances seem to indicate that Castro will not continue to lead the country for much longer. When Gorbachev visited Havana in May 1989, he was carrying in his briefcase a speech announcing the suspension of "all forms of assistance" to Cuba and Nicaragua, including the financing of the guerrilla. The reasons why the Soviet president decided not to deliver his speech were not made known. His action, however, spoke volumes. The events that had already started to occur in East Europe when Gorbachev was visiting Havana, and the feints and bragging of an almost terminal Castro—"there will be no 'perestroyka' here" and "elections are not necessary in Cuba"—have revealed, even to less alert observers, that the Castro regime had been "officially" notified that, from that moment on, it had been left to its own devices.

Number of Supreme Court Members Raised to Nine

PY0504203290 Buenos Aires Domestic in Spanish 1600 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Summary] During a session that ended at 0530 this morning, the Chamber of Deputies approved the Government's draft bill to increase the number of the Supreme Court members from five to nine. The Chamber of Deputies thus turned the draft bill, previously been approved by the Senate, into law.

Bolivia

General Rejects U.S. Military Antidrug Aid

PY0504220690 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 31 Mar 90 p 1

[Text] Armed Forces Commander General Jorge Moreira told PRESENCIA on 30 March that the Bolivian Government will not allow U.S. antidrug troops to participate in military actions against drug trafficking in the country. Moreira minimized a comment by U.S. Department of State official, Sherman Funk, that antidrug operations by the Pentagon in Bolivia have been intensified.

Funk said in Washington that the Pentagon is "adopting strong measures" against drug trafficking in Latin America, especially in Bolivia where antidrug control

has reportedly been intensified despite the fact that the troops were ordered not to open fire.

Moreira said that a special police force is in charge of the antidrug struggle. He added that the recent accords signed in Cartagena should be respected. According to these accords, military and foreign troops are not allowed to participate in the antidrug struggle in drug-producing countries.

Moreira has agreed with Defense Minister Hector Ormachea's statement that the alleged U.S. military aid to fight drug trafficking is only an "offer." Ormachea said that the Bolivian Government expects that this cooperation will arrive but "we do not know when." "Thus far we have not received any U.S. aid. We have not even received routine military aid, let alone military aid, to fight drug trafficking," Ormachea said.

Moreira said that U.S. military cooperation will depend on the direct participation of the Armed Forces in the antidrug struggle. It is up to the president to make a decision on this matter.

According to Moreira, this offer is still pending. He said that the Armed Forces are receiving the normal military aid in keeping with the agreement reached by the two countries.

Upon returning from the United States where he met high-ranking U.S. officers, Army Commander General Rolando Espinoza told the press that the Pentagon "has changed its attitude" toward the antidrug struggle.

According to Espinoza the Pentagon believes that the antidrug struggle should also be carried out in the drug-consumption centers.

Brazil

Cardoso de Mello Denies Rumors of Bank Holiday

PY0604032890 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Report by Cristina Indio do Brazil]

[Text] Economy Minister Zelia Cardoso de Mello has said that the government may modify the limit on the withdrawal of short-term funds, and she denied rumors of another bank holiday. She said that the government will not decree a bank holiday in the next few days, explaining that the rumors which spread throughout the country last week were started by people who somehow want to profit from the current situation.

The minister also denied that the government is planning to stamp the bills that are being withheld in the banks to differentiate them from the ones currently in circulation. According to the rumor, the bills that had not been withheld would suffer a discount when they were deposited in the banks.

[Begin recording] I can give the people an absolute guarantee that there will be no bank holiday. It has not even occurred to government officials to decree one, just as they have not considered the possibility of adopting any such measure as stamping bills. [end recording]

She also said the government is analyzing a modification of the limit on withdrawals of short-term funds. One of the possibilities is to adopt the same rule that regulates the withdrawal of overnight market funds. This rule establishes a limit of 25,000 cruzeiros or 20 percent of the total amount invested, whichever is larger.

Congress Approves Provisional Measure 159

PY0504135490 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Excerpt] Congress has approved, with amendments, Provisional Measure 159 of the government's economic plan.

This measures refers to the conduct of civil servants of the federal government. It establishes, among other things, that any civil servant who leaves his post during working hours will be liable to a written warning. [passage omitted]

Government Signs Trade Agreement With CSSR

PY0604034090 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Brazil and Czechoslovakia have signed a trade cooperation agreement to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The agreement was signed at Itamaraty this afternoon. The agreement is aimed at creating favorable conditions for the development of trade and bilateral cooperation until the year 2000.

The agreement identifies areas and products in which trade can be expanded and diversified, and anticipates the negotiation of financial mechanisms which can facilitate the implementation of joint projects.

In the past few years trade between Brazil and Czechoslovakia has amounted to about $150 million for both sides. Brazil exports soybean meal, iron and manganese ore, coffee, and raw-cotton thread; and imports roller bearings, rock crushers, grinders, rotating ovens for cement production, offset equipment, leather-processing equipment, chemicals, and malt.

Chile

President Bush, PRC President To Pay Visits

PY0504204090 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1621 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Santiago de Chile, 5 Apr (EFE)—Chilean Foreign Minister Enrique Silva Cimma has announced that U.S.

President George Bush will visit Chile in September as part of his tour of Brazil and Argentina.

During a meeting yesterday with the Chilean International Relations Council, Silva Cimma reported that Bush will probably arrive in Santiago on 16 September. During his 48-hour visit, Bush will attend the celebration of the Chilean national day.

Foreign Ministry sources today reported that Peruvian Vice President Luis Alberto Sanchez will pay an official visit to Chile later this month.

PRC President Yang Shangkun will also pay an official visit to Chile in May while Colombian President Virgilio Barco is scheduled to come to the country in June.

The sources added that UNESCO Director Federico Mayor Zaragoza is expected to visit Chile in July and OAS Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in August.

New OAS Ambassador on Ties With Bolivia, Cuba

PY0504134690 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1100 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Heraldo Munoz, new Chilean ambassador to the Organization of American States, OAS, has reported that President Patricio Aylwin will travel to Washington in the near future.

Munoz, a former head of the Socialist Party Foreign Affairs Department, presented his credentials to Venezuelan Edilberto Moreno, OAS Council president. Munoz then met with OAS secretary general, Brazilian Joao Clemente Baena Soarez.

During a press conference in Washington, Heraldo Munoz confirmed that President Aylwin wants to visit the OAS and, also, the United Nations in the near future, but he did not mention any dates.

Munoz explained that Chile is willing to launch a new stage in its relations with Bolivia, and that the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba is being considered and that a decision on the subject will be made in due time.

Government To Sign Accord on Ties With Bulgaria

PY0604014090 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2300 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] The Governments of Chile and the People's Republic of Bulgaria will sign an agreement on reestablishing diplomatic relations on 6 April in Madrid. The agreement expresses the wish to develop friendship and cooperation ties on the basis of the principles of equal rights, respect for sovereignty, and noninterference in domestic affairs. This information was released by the Foreign Ministry.

Minister on Creation of Antiterrorist Police

PY0504195890 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Justice Minister Francisco Cumplido has stated that terrorism can never be justified in a democracy, adding that the government of President Patricio Aylwin is considering the formation of an antiterrorist police unit under the government's control.

[Begin Cumplido recording] Terrorism will never be justified. It is absolutely opposed to human rights. We believe there are three essential measures which should be adopted: first, a set of laws to control terrorism with rational, preventive, and repressive measures; second, high-security prisons, which countries should have because of current terrorist practices; third, a specialized police group, because terrorism uses indiscriminate methods. Innocent people may be affected or frightened by terrorists. Therefore, there must be a specialized police unit subordinated to the government, able to deter terrorist actions, and capable of solving situations like the seizure of hostages, who should be rescued safe and sound. [end recording]

The Minister said that conflicts should be settled peacefully in a democratic state, and that all the weight of the law will be imposed on those who intend to resort to violence.

Cumplido reiterated that violence is incompatible with democracy and that terrorists are either wrong or do not share the ideals of democracy.

The Minister then listed the projects that the government wants to promote through the reform bill it has submitted to Congress.

[Begin Cumplido recording] As we have pointed out, laws should be amended, new prisons should be built, and the groundwork should be laid for the creation of an antiterrorist police unit under government control. [end recording]

This afternoon the Justice Minister will report to Congress in Valparaiso and will meet the House Legislation and Justice Committee. The agenda will include the following issues: the amendment of laws to improve the protection of the rights of people from terrorist actions, penalties, military and penal codes, and abolition of the death penalty.

Defense Minister Denies Nuclear Capability

PY0504191990 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Defense Minister Patricio Rojas has denied a foreign magazine report that Chile is capable of building nuclear weapons. Rojas maintained that Chile has signed the Tlaltelulco treaty and that, consequently, it cannot engage in any project of that type.

Colombia

Extraditables Free Senator Estrada in Medellin

PA0504222190 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2143 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Bogota, 5 Apr (EFE)— Authorities reported today that Liberal Senator Federico Estrada Velez, 54, one of the main leaders of the ruling Liberal Party, was released today in Medellin by the drug-trafficking organization, the Extraditables.

Senator Estrada Velez was kidnapped on 27 March near his home by the Extraditables, the Medellin Cartel's armed wing.

Police Discover 200 Kg of Dynamite in Medellin

PA0504150290 Paris AFP in Spanish 1352 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] Bogota, 5 Apr (AFP)—The police have reported that a truck, with approximately 200 kg of dynamite concealed between toilet paper boxes, was discovered early this morning in a residential sector of northern Bogota.

The vehicle was left abandoned by two youngsters on one of the busiest streets in the northern part of the capital, where the Council of State and the French Liceum operate and where there are family apartments.

"The fuse had already been lit," said an explosives expert of the Secret Police, who also said that when the truck was found, "Horacio Serpa, minister in charge of the Presidency, was approaching the site."

Serpa is substituting for President Virgilio Barco, who is on a tour in Europe.

Discovery of the vehicle was part of the searches security agencies have been carrying out since 31 March, when the shady group, the "Extraditables," announced they would set off 500 kg of dynamite in a "barrio of the Bogota oligarchy."

The group warned that they would detonate the charge as a reprisal for the disappearance of two of their men, Freddy Ospina and Jose Retavista Garzon, who reportedly were detained by the authorities last week in Envigado, south of Medellin, the headquarters of the Medellin Cartel.

Paraguay

Argentine Foreign Ministry Official on Yacyreta

PY0604023090 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 5 Apr 90 pp 12, 13

[Text] While Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem has expressed his desire to suspend the Yacyreta project—"a monument to corruption"—and to pay the workers who would be dismissed, and redefine the hydroelectric project, Dr. Raul Carignano, under secretary of state for Latin American affairs, emphatically said this morning that his country's government "does not have any basis on which to suspend the Yacyreta project "at this moment.

Carignano, who arrived in Asuncion this morning to meet with Paraguayan authorities within the framework of the Binational Commission on Political, Economic, and Social Affairs [Comision Binacional de Asuntos Politicos, Economicos y Sociales], recalled that the IDB [Inter-American Development Bank] has released a $250-million loan to continue the hydroelectric project. "Furthermore, we must remember that Yacyreta is a binational entity and that neither of the two countries can unilaterally suspend the project. Any concern or proposal that Argentina could have in this regard should be discussed with Paraguay," Carignano pointed out.

Asked if he brought any concrete government proposal on the Yacyreta issue, Carignano said: "I want to be quite clear on this issue. There are two aspects here: on the one hand, the Argentine president's statement is related to a concrete idea on the entire Argentine state's attitude towards corruption."

Carignano noted that President Menem is engaged in transforming the Argentine state and that this transformation cannot be carried out unless it is done within the framework of eliminating corruption. "In the case of Yacyreta, when the president of my nation referred to this project he was specifically referring to the Argentine officials working in Yacyreta," the high-ranking Argentine official explained.

Minister [as published] Carignano also pointed out that his government will investigate all reports on corruption at the Yacyreta Binational Entity. Carignano added: "We want to examine everything that has been done in this project, what has been done by representatives of the Argentine Government, and how funds are being handled by those on the Argentine side. Obviously, this does not rule out the possibility of our government talking to the Paraguayan Government to determine how we can jointly contribute to completing this dam as soon as possible, in a stable situation."

Carignano emphasized that President Menem did not make any announcement on the paralyzation of the Yacyreta project. He emphasized: "Indeed, there was a concrete idea to eliminate corruption by the people who have worked and are working in Yacyreta. This is not the first time that corruption in Yacyreta has been revealed. My political party made revelations on this case, and on many others of this nature."

Regarding the possibility that Menem's denunciation was a tactic to solve the strike by the Yacyreta workers, Carignano said that one must not read into the words of the Argentine chief of state "beyond what has been clearly expressed. We believe there is corruption in Yacyreta. We will investigate it, but this does not involve the paralyzation of the project," the Argentine minister indicated.

Moreno Gonzalez Elected Speaker of Chamber

PY0504035590 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 29 Mar 90 pp 8, 9

[Excerpt] In an atmosphere charged with tension and uncertainty, the Chamber of Deputies this morning elected officials for the current legislative year. As expected, the "orthodox" Colorado candidate Jose Antonio Moreno Gonzalez was elected the new president by a 41-28 vote over the "democratic" Colorado candidate Persio Da Silva. Most deputies from the Authentic Radical Liberal Party voted for Moreno Gonzalez. [passage omitted]

Peru

Preparations, Events Relating to 8 Apr Elections

Voter Registration Closes

PY0504140290 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1200 GMT 5 Mar 90

[Excerpts] Hundreds of people have asked the National Electoral Court to postpone the deadline for issuing a duplicate of their electoral card. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Reporter] People here say that electoral cards were issued until the last day of the municipal election [in November 1989]. Why can they not get their cards today?

[Official] Those are the court orders. The electoral court has repeatedly called on people to come and collect their electoral cards. They were given extra time but they did not come. It is their responsibility because the court has done everything possible to accommodate them.

[Reporter] You mean the registration is definitely closed?

[Official] The registration process has been closed. The first deadline was postponed but this one is definite. [end recording]

Final Preparations Reported

PY0504143690 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1200 GMT 5 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Jesus Hernani, president of El Callao Electoral Court, has announced that everything is ready for tomorrow's distribution of the electoral material to El Callao schools.

On 6 April the electoral material will be sent to all education centers in El Callao Constitutional Province. El Callao's electoral court will work with the Armed Forces to move the ballots to all five districts and to adapt school classrooms for the balloting to prevent any last-minute inconveniences. The electoral material is closely guarded by a combined force of the Army and National Police.

Each package includes the list of voters, a ballot box, voting cards, stamps, ink pads, fountain pens, indelible ink, tape, and a banner with the list of candidates for president, senator, and deputy. A total of 1,673 ballot boxes will be installed in El Callao Constitutional Province. Each box will receive the votes of 210 voters. [passage omitted]

Candidate Barrantes on Program

PY0504164090 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 18 Mar 90 Sunday Supplement pp 4, 5

[Interview with Socialist Left Presidential Candidate Alfonso Barrantes Lingan by Manuel Cisneros Milla; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [Cisneros] What concrete measures will your party adopt to overcome inflation?

[Barrantes] In our government plan we state that we believe eight policies must be adopted simultaneously, or they will fail to reach their goals. These eight are indispensable in the fight to overcome inflation. The first policy is a monetary and credit policy aimed at ensuring the real value of the national currency, at dedollarizing the economy, and at appropriately mobilizing the assignment of financial resources by stimulating savings in the country through adequate interest rates. The second policy is related to a reform of the financial system to orient it toward reducing the cost of services, to promote the mobilization of capital, to regionalize development and trade banks, and to encourage the creation of cooperative and regional banks, thus revoking the current law for nationalization of the banks. The third policy is related to foreign trade, which will be based on the promotion of exports, on a stable exchange rate, a relative standardization of fees, and the elimination of exemptions. The fourth policy refers to international economic relations and seeks to stimulate direct foreign investment under rules of law that fully respect our national sovereignty. This policy of economic relations pertains to the foreign debt, the burden of which should be shouldered by both creditors and debtors. This is already understood by both parties. The solution to the foreign debt problem must be found through negotiations; taking into account the internal social debt and the need for development, justice, democracy, and peace. The fourth policy refers to the tax issue. This must be stable and simple. We will try to expand the tax base, to substantially enhance the administration and control of the tax system, and to eliminate exemptions; all of which will imply a significant increase in the tax burden, and therefore, an increase in state resources. The sixth policy relates to rationalizing public expenditures to increase the country's capital, seeking stable and balanced growth of the different social and regional sectors. Here we have to mention the need to reduce the fiscal deficit in those sectors which do not include health, education, housing, defense, and national security. But we must also refer to the need to privatize some public enterprises, to reorganize others, and to maintain within the state those of a

strategic nature. Others can be turned into joint enterprises in the search for efficiency. The seventh policy refers to prices and is intended to foster domestic production, to replace imports, to change the terms of trade in favor of the rural areas, and to promote capitalization through intensive projects in manpower. The generalized subsidies on consumption will be eliminated and reorganized as direct subsidies for the social sectors of extreme poverty. The last is a policy of productive employment and income because it is important for us to generate employment opportunities and to improve incomes, so the objective of the socialist government will be to defend the real level of salaries and labor stability. These are, in sum, the eight measures that will have to be carried out. Together with these measures we must also deal with the issue of restructuring the country's productive apparatus, because everyone is aware that we must all contribute to helping increase production and meeting the people's basic demands. We feel that the expansion of the internal market will facilitate the development of the economy of scales, which will increase the general level of productivity and the international level of competitiveness of our products. Based on these general guidelines, our government program includes a set of sectorial programs for agriculture, fisheries, mining, and hydrocarbons, and protection of the environment, which is also very important and represents a new commitment to defense of the ecology.

[Cisneros] Can you tell us about the similarities and differences between the proposals of the Socialist Left and those of Fredemo [Democratic Front]?

[Barrantes] Some agreements are possible. But when we agree on the need for rain, the difference is that we want rain to make the fields more fertile and productive, to meet the demands of the large number of Peruvians who live in extreme poverty. They want rain to improve their entertainment fields so they can fully enjoy life.

[Cisneros] What do you mean by that?

[Barrantes] What I mean is that the essential objective of the socialists is the human being, men and women, with flesh and bones, who suffer the disastrous economic policy implemented by this and previous governments. Our commitment is to implement measures that will eradicate extreme poverty. We agree on the need to reduce inflation, but we want it to serve those sectors which have been ignored, the poorest sectors.

[Cisneros] There seems to be only two ways to deal with high inflation rates: a gradual approach that keeps inflation going forever, or the shock approach. Which approach will you implement?

[Barrantes] I do not think the only alternatives are gradualism or shock. What we need is a process of economic stabilization. You must know that what the right-wing candidate says is a common position of all Democratic-Front members and only reflects the Libertad Movement program. Former President Belaunte has spoken of the need to be cautious in applying adjustment measures, and former Minister Kuczynski has talked about a progressive application of measures. We think you cannot operate on a very weak person without a preparatory blood transfusion. Our people have to remember our black September two years ago, when then-Minister Salinas implemented his harsh economic package. A shock will hit people a thousand times harder than Salinas' package did. This will cause many Peruvians to die, especially our children, who suffer a shamefully high rate of malnutrition. We believe we have to work to lift those poverty levels first. We would apply the eight measures I have talked about to advance toward a more realistic economy and exchange rate afterwards.

[Cisneros] Those supporting the shock approach also support a compensation program to alleviate the problems of the poorest sectors. Your proposal is really gradualist. Is there no other alternative?

[Barrantes] They talk about a compensation program alright, but we, the socialists who have never been in office, would like to ask the definitive question: Why did they not implement a compensation program when they were in office? Perhaps it is only an election promise. History shows that they, as people and as a political organization, never cared much about the problems of the majority: those from the middle class down to the most common sectors. [passage omitted]

Deputy Candidate's House Bombed

PY0504212090 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1700 GMT 5 Apr 90

[Text] This is Zenaida Mateos reporting directly from Chiclayo at 1322.

This morning at 0630, dynamite was thrown at the house of Mr. Hildebrando Salgado, the Popular Action [AP] departmental secretary and a deputy candidate for Lambayeque Department under ballot box no. 4. This attack took place despite the presence of a security policeman. Property damage, including broken windows and damaged doors and household goods, was reported.

Some neighbors saw a blue motorcycle and a cream-colored pick-up truck circulating in the area at that time.

Prefect Jorge Escuza Lora, Police Force General Andres Villanueva, and Prosecutor Jesus Antonio Sono Avalos have visited the site.

Two other attacks occurred earlier; One against Miguel Angel Bartra, a former AP secretary in Lambayeque Department, on Saturday, 31 March. Guillermo Baca Aguinaga, a senatorial candidate for the APRA [American Popular Revolutionary Alliance] party, was also attacked on Monday, 2 April.

Despite all this, the city looks calm. The electoral material has already arrived at the Lambayeque Electoral Court and is being distributed. Credentials are also being distributed to the electoral table staff.

Uruguay

Gros Espiell: Group of 8 May Accept New Members

PY0504153290 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1614 GMT 4 Apr 90

[Text] Montevideo, 4 Apr (EFE)—Uruguayan Foreign Minister Hector Gros Espiell yesterday announced that the presidents of the seven Rio de Janeiro Group member countries will decide whether they will accept new member nations. The Uruguayan minister asserted that it "is possible" that the Rio de Janeiro Group, also known as the Group of Eight, may increase its membership in light of requests made by Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, and Paraguay. Currently, the Rio de Janeiro Group is comprised of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela, since Panama was suspended after former Panamanian leader Manuel Antonio Noriega, currently under arrest in the United States, took over the Panamanian Government.

The Uruguayan minister, who this morning shared a working breakfast with the correspondents of international press agencies in Montevideo, asserted that the Rio de Janeiro Group members agree on "the need for U.S. troops to withdraw from Panama." Minister Espiell said: "The activities of these troops should be restricted to the terms of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties." He noted that the "Rio de Janeiro Group members agree that the current Panamanian authorities should be endorsed by a popular consultation, which could be either an election or a referendum."

Gros Espiell disclosed that during the meeting in Mexico last week, the Group of Eight's foreign ministers agreed to establish a multilateral telephone network that would allow the presidents and foreign ministers of the group to be in permanent contact. He added that "Brazil and Mexico, because of their greater technological development, were chosen to form a working commission and make the telephone network operational in 30 days time."

When asked about the group's relationship with the United States, Gros Espiell asserted that "it is not bad, but that there is not as much contact as, for example, with the EEC." The Uruguayan minister said that it is a "great mistake" to believe that Latin America will be abandoned by the EEC and the United States because of the political and economic changes taking place in East Europe. He said: "These changes should be welcomed with optimism, because they were prompted by the people and open the possibility for greater trade with Latin America."

According to Gros Espiell, Uruguay "has 40 years of trade experience" with East Europe, especially with the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. He said: "Sales, especially of foodstuffs, could increase with financial aid from the EEC and the United States." Gros Espiell said that the meeting to be held on 12 August in Budapest by foreign ministers of the Group of Eight and of East Europe is "very interesting."

The minister asserted that the group hopes a peaceful agreement will be reached by the United States and Cuba over the United States' TV Marti beamed to Cuba, but asserted that it will not mediate in the conflict.

Venezuela

700 Troops Prepared To Travel to Nicaragua

PA0604025890 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 0000 GMT 6 Apr 90

[Text] Defense Minister Filmo Lopez has confirmed that Venezuelan soldiers will travel to Nicaragua on 10 April to participate in the United Nations' peace mission to demobilize the contras.

The defense minister said that (?congress has approved) sending troops, and approximately 700 members of the Paratroopers Battalion will travel to Honduras and Nicaragua in the next few hours to participate in that peace mission. Regarding the activities and work of the Venezuelan soldiers, Defense Minister Filmo Lopez said:

[Begin Lopez recording] The members of the Venezuelan Armed Forces will be serving under the orders of the United Nations to oversee the demobilization of the contras, the surrender of weapons and all equipment, including uniforms, and the destruction of that materiel, in the manner that has been established by the Nicaraguan Government and the representatives of the contras. [end recording]

It must be stated that this is the first time Venezuelan soldiers have traveled outside the country for this type of mission. Foreign Minister Reinaldo Figueredo today spoke about the guarantees that the United Nations is providing to the soldiers, who will remain in Central America for approximately two months. The troops will be seen off by Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez as they leave from Libertador Base on the morning of 10 April.